



Ineffable Twaddle

"It is my business to know what other people don't know."

The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle

A monthly publication of
The Sound of the Baskervilles
A Scion Society of the Baker Street Irregulars • Since March 31, 1980
Serving the Greater Puget Sound Region of Western Washington



Volume 31, Issue 9
September 2012

Members Share: Book Reviews

The Singular Case of the Duplicate Holmes

by Jan Walker, Ian Henry Publications, Romford Essex, UK
and Players Press, Inc., Studio City, CA USA, 1994

By Charlie Cook, Sumter, SC

Jan Walker, a health psychologist with a background in nursing and author of many books related to her profession, has written a dandy, well-plotted pastiche with plenty of Canon-quality atmosphere and clever, entertaining bi-play between our two heroes—with Watson often giving as good as he gets from his moody friend.

Someone has been committing dastardly deeds adroitly disguised as Sherlock Holmes, even including vicious letters in the detective's handwriting. The object of the villain's treachery is a lovely young heiress, Miss Elizabeth Penrose. She confronts the real Holmes with accusations, but he is able to convince her of his innocence in this matter and agrees to investigate on her behalf.

While hounded by an American who may or may not be a journalist, the Master delves into Miss P's past and that of those who might gain if she should meet with an "accident". Watson is used as a guardian angel for the lass and also to lead Lestrade on a merry chase when the Scotland Yarder comes to arrest Holmes.

The sleuth uncovers much skullduggery intended not only for Miss P but also to destroy the detective himself. The game's afoot with exciting chase scenes across rooftops and throughout foggy old London. There is a fight scene not only with fist-a-cuffs but with Holmes displaying his skills in a sword fight. The action is (perhaps) a bit histrionic, but still fun.

Not all ends as Holmes would have liked and he blames himself for some events that went awry, but both Watson and Miss P praise him for what he did accomplish. The lady gives both of them a token of her appreciation and it is only months later that the Doctor discovers what Holmes received and believes that to Holmes, she was much more than a client.

Sherlockians, I believe, will enjoy this tale immensely. One note: The publisher erroneously

indicated that Sherlock Holmes was a fictional character. Piffle! (*Oops, wrong 'tec!*)

Masters of Mystery: The Strange Friendship of Arthur Conan Doyle & Harry Houdini

by Christopher Sandford, Palgrave MacMillan, 2011

By John Longenbaugh, Seattle, WA

Friendship is not always founded on affinities. Sometimes it's founded on oppositions, which is certainly true for one of the most celebrated, if oddest, friendships of the 20th century—that between Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Harry Houdini.

The two met when both were world-famous and already on opposite sides of one of the oddest debates of the 20th century. The new religion of Spiritualism had grown significantly since the mid-1800s, so that by the time the two men met in 1920 it was nearing the height of its cultural influence, its numbers swelled by grieving relatives of those killed in the First World War. Doyle, who had become a practicing spiritualist after suffering a series of deaths of friends and family members (including his son Kingsley in 1918), had grown increasingly adamant in defending his beliefs. Houdini, who had run "ghost shows" himself when a struggling young Vaudeville performer, was increasingly critical of the many fraudulent mediums whose "spiritual manifestations" during séances used trickery to fleece the grieving.

Sandford's writing is fluent and absorbing, and his main topic—the friendship between the two men—is fresh and revelatory. As he points out, this is not an attempt to create a full biography of either Doyle or Houdini, and that's probably a good thing, as this reader noted a series of small gaffes and inaccuracies in recounting the work and careers of both men. (Examples: the Professor Challenger story *The Poison Belt* is described as a novel about the "release of a deadly gas," when it's actually about the earth entering an interstellar gaseous cloud; and Hardeen, Houdini's brother, is described by Sandford as his rival, when he was actually supplied with the equipment and training for his act by Houdini himself.) While this suggests some...

Continued on Page 3

Inside this issue:

<i>Members Share: Book Reviews</i>	1
<i>Was It Murder?? Or Merely Self-Defence?</i>	2
<i>Arthur Conan Doyle Weekend in Haslemere, Surrey</i>	2
<i>Things to See, Buy, Do & Know</i>	3
<i>Member News & Updates</i>	4



The Sound of the Baskervilles' "The Anatomy of the World of Sherlock Holmes" Conference was a Real Hit!!

Read all about our celebration of the first world-wide "Sherlock Holmes Week" on August 5, 2012 ...at our website at <http://www.soundofthebaskervilles.com/>





T.S. McHugh's Public House is at 21 Mercer Street, Seattle, (206) 282-1910. **Come early, order a meal, and catch up with the other SOBs!**



Twaddle Reading Test!

A free, fun, floating flea market will be held at 3:30 p.m. just prior to our September Meeting!!! Get there early for the best selection. Contributions to the Club's treasury will be gladly accepted, as will your own shopping bags!

Meet Stuart "Stu" Smith

Some may have met our newest Stu—there are now three in this Club—at the August 19 meeting. It took him 3 hours to ferry from Poulsbo and drive through the madness that was "Hemp Fest", but he was actually there at the back of the room! Here's his background:

"I retired from the Navy in 1991 after 20 years as a Surface Warfare Officer, and in June retired from my second career as a high school teacher, most of it spent at Spectrum, the alternative high school for the North Kitsap School District, where I taught history and English in the classroom and all subjects in the off-campus program.

When I was 14, my father gave me The Collected Stories of Sherlock Holmes. I spent that summer reading them, and I've been a fan ever since. I think my favorites are 'The Speckled Band' and 'The Hound of the Baskervilles', both of which I have taught in my English classes, but I'm also particularly fond of 'The Devil's Foot' because it is set in Cornwall, where I was stationed with the Navy for three years in the early 1980s. My favorite Holmes actor is Jeremy Brett."

Was It Murder?? Or Merely Self-Defence?

The **September 16, 2012** Business Meeting of The Sound of the Baskervilles will begin at **4:00 p.m.** at T.S. McHugh's Public House. **The social hour starts at 3:00 p.m.!**

Our 32st tale—in publication date order—appeared originally in 1904 in both *The Strand* and *Collier's*. **Says PFL David:** The victim is a violent, unpleasant drunkard with some remarkably peculiar habits! But was a harpoon to the chest what he deserved? A shadow on a blind, a scream in the night, the appearance of company expected, a knife and a notebook...these are the clues. A burglary gone bad leads to an arrest, but is a thief also a murderer? Holmes thinks not.

Note the similarities in the capture of this case's murderer with that of Jefferson Hope in *STUD*, as you refresh yourself on "The Adventure of Black Peter"! 

Arthur Conan Doyle Weekend in Haslemere, Surrey

Dispatch From London #2
—By **SOB Treasurer Allen Nelson**

At the Sherlock Holmes Society of London meeting last October, Margaret and I sat next to a Mr. Joe McDonald from Haslemere who was organizing a weekend event in Haslemere celebrating Arthur Conan Doyle. ACD had built and lived in a house called Undershaw between 1886 and 1906 in the nearby town of Hindhead. It was in this house that he wrote some of the most famous of the Holmes stories, including *HOUN*. Margaret could not go but graciously encouraged me to attend.

Haslemere is approximately 50 miles southwest of London on the rail line that continues on to Portsmouth. It was a fast, one hour trip from Waterloo Station, a route that ACD no doubt rode many times in the years he lived here. Many members of the London society attended as did many local residents of Haslemere and surrounding communities.

The opening event on Friday evening, June 15, 2012 was a reception and dinner at the Georgian Hotel, which culminated in a performance of the one-act play "Sherlock Holmes...The Last Act", performed by Roger Lewellyn for whom the play was written many years ago. It was a virtuoso performance before around 60 people.

On Saturday, local historian John Owen Smith led a group of about 20 on a wet walk in the 1700 acre Hindhead Common. The Common, originally pasture land and now forest and meadow, is laced with trails and several segments of the original London to Portsmouth carriage road. We trod on land traversed by Doyle, George Bernard Shaw, J.M Berrie and Alfred Lord Tennyson! Later in the morning we listened to a talk by Andrew Lycette, author of several ACD biog-

raphies on Doyle's life in and around Hindhead. We were free for lunch (to a nice pub called The Swan with Frank Wright, a SHSL member I got to know) and then in the afternoon saw a screening of "The Hound of the Baskervilles" filmed in the early 1960's, with Peter Cushing and Christopher Lee as Holmes and Watson. The film was introduced by Alistair Duncan, who has written several recent books about ACD, notably one titled "The Norwood Author". We had a couple of hours to explore the town and prepare for the evening event. Saturday's dinner was again at the Georgian Hotel and included a murder mystery conducted by two actors as Holmes and Watson and eight members of the audience who were "volunteered" to play other characters. A good time was had by all, and the long day ended about eleven o'clock.

Sunday's conclusion had a great presentation by Catherine Cooke of the SHSL and music held in a beautiful private home. Ms. Cooke talked about composers mentioned in the Canon and favorites of Doyle. After tea and scrumptious cakes, the event ended with a small group singing several songs based on ACD's poetry of mostly music hall variety.

The penultimate event was a luncheon at the Fox and Pelican in Grayshott, one of ACD's haunts in the area. Final talks by Roger Johnson on Doyle and by Giles Brandreth on the famous meeting at the Langham Hotel between Doyle, Oscar Wilde and J. M. Stoddard of *Lippincott's Magazine*, from which resulted "The Sign of Four".

A late train back to London ended a very busy and very interesting weekend. The Sherlockians, Doyleans, and Haslemereans made this American feel very welcome on this special occasion! 

Things to See, Buy, Do & Know

● **From Entertainment Weekly:** “On a network full of brilliant crime-solvers, Sherlock Holmes seems almost redundant. But it’s comparisons to BBC’s beloved *Sherlock* that have CBS defending the addition of fall drama “*Elementary*”, starring Jonny Lee Miller and Lucy Liu...Can *Sherlock Holmes: Miami* be far behind?”



● **From Australian Sherlockian Bill Barnes:** An outfit in Seattle called “Grubwithus” is soliciting attendance at a September 13 event where you’ll receive a free DVD of CBS’s upcoming show, “*Elementary*”. Watch the DVD then attend the meal at *Smith* (332 15th Ave E [between Thomas St & Harrison St], Seattle) “for a right-proper English meal and a bit of a chin wag about what you think about the new Holmes.”

● **From SOB Dorothy Normandin of North Grafton, MA:**

⇒ Was shopping in the gourmet food section in either Marshall’s or T.J. Maxx, and found a can of “**Bond Street English Breakfast Tea**”. One side of the tin depicted Big Ben and the Houses of Parliament, while the other had a picture of Baker Street—complete with Holmes and Watson. I thought it was good to add to my Sherlockian collection (*now I’ll have to try the tea!*).



⇒ I’ll be attending the “**Sherlock Holmes: Behind the Canonical Screen Symposium**” in L.A. over Labor Day weekend!

Join us Friday, September 14 at Ivar’s Salmon House!

On Friday, September 14, SOBs who wish may convene at Ivar’s Salmon House (401 N.E. Northlake Way)—when we will meet **Australian Sherlockian Bill Barnes**, “Captain” (president) of The Sydney Passengers! *Happy hour is at 4:00; we’ll be seated for dinner at 5:00 p.m.* Come if you can, and “*keep clam*”!!

● **From SOB Geoff Jeffery:** Went to Bellingham for Cara’s birthday and decided to tour their Fairhaven District. Came across a sandwich board advertising “**Mrs. Hudson’s Yarns and Teas**” (1106 Harris Avenue, #103 [in Finnegan’s Alley]; [360] 543-5883; www.mrshudsons.com). Though they specialize in yarn, it’s a very nice place that sells teas and Sherlockian items.

● **From District Messenger Editor Roger Johnson:** “**The London of Sherlock Holmes**” by John Christopher (not to be confused with the book by Michael Harrison) is full of numerous careless errors. My advice is *caveat lector*.

● **From Peter Blau:**

⇒ “**Garment of Shadows**” by Laurie King (Random House, \$26.95) is subtitled, “A novel of suspense featuring Mary Russell and Sherlock Holmes,” and lives up to its billing. It’ll be available in early September.

⇒ Willis Frick reports that he now has a new host and URL for Sherlocktron at: www.sherlocktron.com.



From Former SOB President Becky Geis

If you missed the tribute to Sherlock Holmes on the “Today” show on August 17, the Baker Street Babes have it on their blog for viewing: <http://www.bakerstreetbabes.com/> Reading their blog makes me wonder again **how to attract more youth to our group**. I asked son John to think about it. We might consider starting a Twitter feed or our own blog—in addition to the web page. It would be another way of posting about past events, as well as publicizing upcoming events. John also suggested posting our meetings on www.reddit.com.



Maybe if we had more young people involved, they could point us in the right direction! I just know that **with the popularity of the BBC “Sherlock” series, we should have more young people attending than we do.**

What fun to be able to watch them discover Holmes as we once did! I will keep thinking on it, and will have John do the same. If we come up with any brainstorm, we’ll let you know!

Members Share...

Continued from Page 1

...rushed research, Sandford’s access to previously unreleased archives does give an unprecedented picture of their troubled friendship, as well as fresh insights by contrasting and comparing their status as self-made men and early 20th century celebrities.

To Sherlockians, the credulity of Holmes’ “literary agent” Doyle about spiritualism is often a source of bewildered embarrassment. Perhaps Sandford’s greatest accomplishment is providing a sympathetic account of the writer’s quest for faith, in which Doyle asserted that spiritualism “wants to be approached not in the spirit of a detective approaching a suspect, but in that of a humble, religious soul, yearning for hope and comfort.” That it provided both to him is evidence of the oft-encountered gulf between irrational faith and rational enquiry.

Sandford also gives convincing evidence

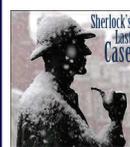
that both men had mixed motives in seeking out the other, for while Doyle fervently believed that he might be able to “convert” the younger man to his faith, Houdini was given to bragging about having “collected” the esteemed writer. To maintain their friendship, both modified their convictions when speaking to each other. But this careful diplomacy eventually broke down over several celebrated spiritualist cases and, by 1924, each was denouncing the other in print and in person.

Yet some tenderness remained. After Houdini’s death in 1926, Doyle and his widow Bess maintained a sympathetic, thoughtful correspondence. While Spiritualism has faded away as a major religious movement, it still is a pleasant thought that in some mutually agreeable afterlife the two men might be reunited for one more good long chat.



LAKWOOD PLAYHOUSE, SEPTEMBER 23, 2012

The Lakewood Players will present “*Sherlock’s Last Case*” this fall.



The SOBs will meet for the September 23 matinee performance at 2:00 p.m.

Those wishing to meet for lunch prior should be at Panera Bread at 12:00 p.m. in the Lakewood Town Center Mall, where the theatre is located.

Ticket prices range from \$18 to \$24. Order yours at (253) 588-0042 between 2:00 and 6:00 p.m., or go to:

www.lakewoodplayhouse.org.



The Sound
of the
Baskervilles

By appointment
of Her Majesty,
Queen Victoria

Ineffable Twaddle

A monthly publication of
The Sound of the Baskervilles
A Scion Society of the Baker Street Irregulars since March 31, 1980
Serving the Greater Puget Sound Region of Western Washington

President: David Haugen, PFL, SOB, PSC
Treasurer: Allen Nelson (nelsonah46@yahoo.com)
Secretary/Editor: Terri Haugen (terri@soundofthebaskervilles.com)
Historian: Lloyd Hedberg (lloyd@soundofthebaskervilles.com)
Lending Librarian: Sheila Holtgrieve (sheilaholtgrieve@gmail.com)
Webmaster: Stuart Nelan (stu@soundofthebaskervilles.com)
Website: www.soundofthebaskervilles.com

Direct correspondence to:

3606 Harborcrest Court N.W.
Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981 USA
Phone: 253-853-5187
Fax: 253-853-5187
Email: david@soundofthebaskervilles.com



Dates of Interest

- **SUNDAY, Sept. 16**
Regular Monthly Meeting, Social = 3:00 p.m.;
Business = 4:00 at T.S. McHugh's
- **SUNDAY, Sept. 23**
Lakewood Playhouse, 2:00 p.m., "Sherlock's Last Case". Meet for lunch at Panera Bread at 12:00 p.m. in the Lakewood Town Center Mall, where the theatre is located.
- **SUNDAY, Oct. 21**
Regular Monthly Meeting, Social = 3:00 p.m.;
Business = 4:00 at T.S. McHugh's

Member News & Updates

SOBs attending the August Meeting, presided over by **PFL David Haugen**, were:

Stephen Adkins	Al Nelson	John Nelson
Barbara Nelson	Lauran Stevens	Terri Haugen
Sheila Holtgrieve	Khayah Brookes	Pat McIntosh
John Longenbaugh	Brooke Perkins	Lloyd Hedberg
Catherine Bancroft	Stuart Smith	

News & Notes:

- We met one of our newest Members for the first time, **Stu Smith!** See sidebar on Page 2. ☆ Returning after our Sherlock Week celebration was **Michael Glenn**, who also paid dues and joined that day! Welcome, Michael!! ☆ We also welcomed several guests. Returning also after our Sherlock Week celebration were **Tom Keogh** and **Amelia Gill**. **Bob Coghill, BSI** from Toronto—whom we'd also met at our Sherlock Week celebration—was still in town, so he came too, as did Lloyd's wife **Frances**, whom we hadn't seen in about two years! ☆ **Catherine** took the prize for the quiz on **PRIO**. ☆ **Pat** gave us an update on **SOB Stu Shiffman**: He was back in rehab, wants short-term visits and is in good spirits; he's at Foss Home on Greenwood in Seattle.

- **From SOB James Romnes:** "Bryan and Emily participated in WestMatch XXI, the regional Cowboy Action Shooting Championship in early August. Over 120 shooters from WA and across the nation also participated by shooting the firearms and wearing the clothing of the American Old West. Bryan, whose Old

The Sound of the Baskervilles is a scion society of the Baker Street Irregulars, serving the greater Puget Sound Region of Western Washington, U.S.A., and has met monthly since March 31, 1980.

\$20 per year brings Members the monthly newsletter "Ineffable Twaddle", a copy of Beaten's Christmas Annual, and the incalculable benefits of association with a group of certifiable Holmes aficionados.

Meetings are held the 2nd Monday of each month. Location of the meetings may vary. Regularly scheduled additional events throughout the year include: "The Master's Dinner" celebrating Holmes' birthday (January), "The Annual Wreath Throw" commemorating Holmes' loss at Reichenbach Falls (May), "The Dr. John H. Watson Picnic" (July), and "The Will Crakes Memorial Jollification" (December). Other activities—book crawls, teas, plays and gaming events—are as announced.

To join, send your check for dues—\$20 for individuals, \$30 for families (U.S. funds only)—to the address shown at left.

West alias is 'Wild Man Williams' won his category's man-on-man shoot. Emily, alias 'Fightin' Irish Rose', took 1st place as best dressed Victorian female and came in 2nd in the lady's pocket pistol match. For that she used an 1874 manufactured Webley .442 bull dog revolver."

- **From SOB Geoff Jeffery:** "Got this e-mail from granddaughter Erika: 'Hi grampa for halloween I am going to be sherlock homes and thought you could help me find a costume.' How cool is this? As it turns out, I have a children's Sherlock Inverness cape and hat that will fit her perfectly. Future new Club Member in the making!!"

- **From SOB Margie Deck:** "Fun 'what if' from one of my favorite Sherlockians, Ron Kritter on 'Welcome Holmes'—

"It must have come to mind because of all the talk of Lucy Liu as Dr. Watson. I'm referring to a production we saw about thirty years ago of King Lear done in the classical Japanese theater form, Noh. All parts in the tragedy were performed by men...So blame it on the weather, but what, I began to wonder, about a Sherlock Holmes production with all female actors? I amused myself by casting Maggie Smith as Professor Moriarty. Emma Thompson could be Dr. Watson. (Full disclosure: I've had an old-guy crush on Ms. Thompson for years.) Perhaps Holmes should be performed by the protean, Meryl Streep. Would Tilda Swinton be too far of a stretch?"

- **From SOB Librarian Sheila Holtgrieve:** "Here's baby Felix in his 'Hugh Heifer' loungewear! Moo!"

